GBS
A Leavitt Group Company

GBS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Tribal Leadership Compassion

Nurturing Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace

PRESENTED BY
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GBS Director, Behavioral Health Consulting

Behavioral Health Services

Provided by our in-house Behavioral Health Consultant

- Overall Mental Health Assessment
- Referrals and Resource Navigation
  - Vendors/EAP Relationships
- Mental Health Policy Review
- Review & Interpret Behavioral Health Insurance Claims
- Provide Recommendations for Interventions to Improve Outcomes
- Behavioral Health Survey
- Employee Education & Training
- Webinars & Seminars
- Leadership Trainings on Mental Health & Substance Use
  - Mental Health First Aid
  - Mental Health Overview
  - Substance Use Awareness

What We Will Be Covering Today

- Explore the current mental health landscape
- The impact of stress and mental health in our lives, and the critical need to prioritize brain health
- Ability to recognize signs of mental health challenges
- Effective communication strategies for addressing concerns related to worsening mental health
- Appropriate resources to provide employees in need

What We Will Be Covering Today

- Native American populations are more likely to experience psychological distress and mental health disorders than other demographic groups
- 2019, only 13.9% Native American adults received mental health services
- SAMHSA reported in 2022 Native Americans are more likely to binge on alcohol or engage in heavy alcohol use.
- The rise on overdose death rates increased by 39% between 2019- 2020

Barriers to Care

Economic

Cost is a major barrier. AI/ANs have the highest poverty rate (**26.6%**) in the U.S., affecting their ability to afford healthcare, medication, healthy food, and transportation. **21%** lack health insurance.

Lack of Access to Care

IHS offers healthcare to Native Americans, but tribal regions often lack mental health facilities. **87%** of AI/ANs do not live on reservations, further limiting access to Native clinics and hospitals.

Stigma

Stigma around getting help is prevalent. Fear of appearing weak or changing others' perceptions, along with misconceptions about mental health, result in negative attitudes and reduced help-seeking.

Mistrust of Doctors

Mistrust toward the U.S. government due to past medical trauma and ongoing oppression. Western medicine may not align with AI/AN values, leading some to prefer traditional healing methods.

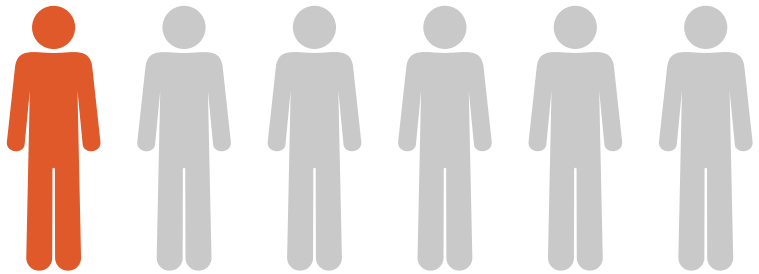
Mental Health

Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his own community.

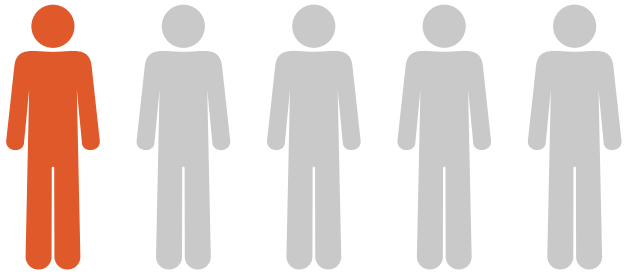
World Health Organization

Mental Health Today

By the Numbers



1 in 6 U.S. youth [aged 6-17] experience a mental health disorder each year



1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year

33.4%

of U.S. adults with mental illness also experienced a substance use disorder in 2021

Balancing Life &
Mental Health

Stressors

- Health Concerns
- Option Paralysis
- Devices Constantly Alarming
- Never-Ending “To Do Lists”
- Relationships
- Family Conflicts
- Deadlines
- Demanding Social Life or Lack of Social Community

Balancing Life & Mental Health

Effects of Stress on the Body

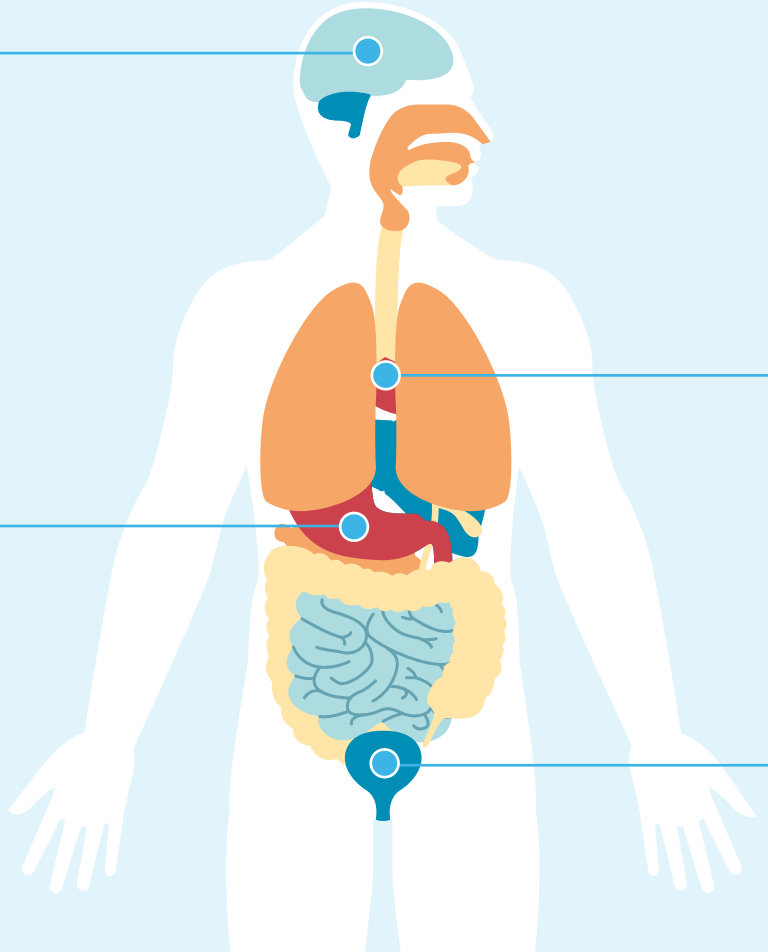
Brain

Anxiety, depression, lack of concentration, headaches, dizziness, panic, anger

* Stress = Involuntary physical and psychological response to stressor

Stomach

Upset stomach, acid reflex, pain ulcers and change in appetite leading to weight gain



Immune System

Suppressed immune system leading to illness and high levels of inflammation

Heart

Increased heart rate and blood pressure leading to increased risk of high cholesterol and heart attack

Reproductive System

Decreased hormone production leading to reduced fertility and sex drive

Brain Interprets the Body & Surrounding Environment

Balancing Life & Mental Health

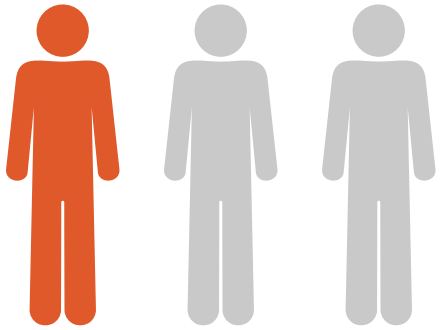
Burnout

Burnout results when **stressors are not managed** and nearly everything becomes intolerable.

This can take months to repair.

Impact in the Workplace

By the Numbers



1 in 3 American workers suffer from chronic work stress

$27 Billion

worth of workdays are lost to mental health absences

- Job performance and productivity
- Engagement with one's work
- Communication with coworkers
- Physical capability and daily functioning

Some Questions

What is your workplace experience?

Have you or someone in your community experienced a mental health condition?

Were you aware of resources?

How easy was it to access care?

Mental Health & Leadership

- Conversations regarding importance of mental health
- Lead by example and empower employees
- Ongoing education on resources
- Create a safe environment
- Regular check-ins
- Setting clear and realistic expectations
- Investment in education and training

Helen, you're the Team Leader, why don't you jump first?

Company Leadership Investment

By the Numbers

40%

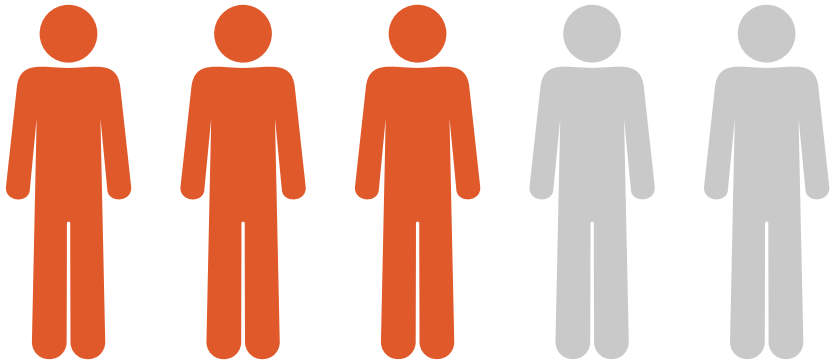
of employees agree that their company invests in developing supportive managers

34%

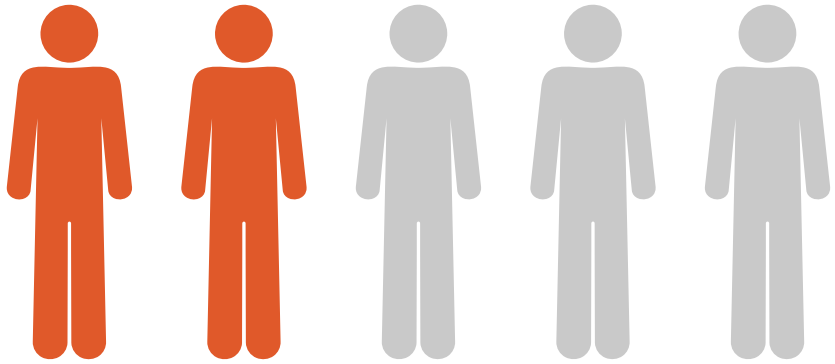
of employees state that their company's leadership speaks openly about mental health

Managerial Support

By the Numbers



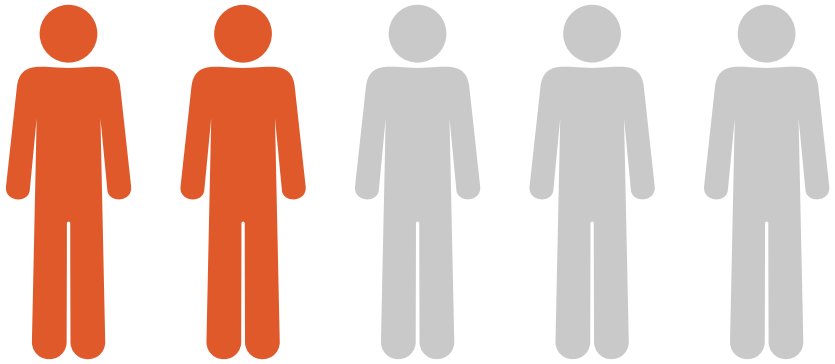
3 in 5 employees agree that their manager cares about their well-being



2 in 5 employees report that their manager encourages them to take off time when needed

Employee Empowerment

By the Numbers



2 in 5 employees are not comfortable providing feedback to their manager

47%

of employees know about their company's mental health services **but only**

38%

would feel comfortable using their company's services

Bell Seal

Strengthen Workplace Mental Health

Major Depressive Disorder

Symptoms

- Sad or irritable mood
- Major changes in sleep, appetite, and energy
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, and remembering
- Physical slowing or restlessness
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Lack of interest in or pleasure from activities that were once enjoyed
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, and emptiness
- Physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and pain

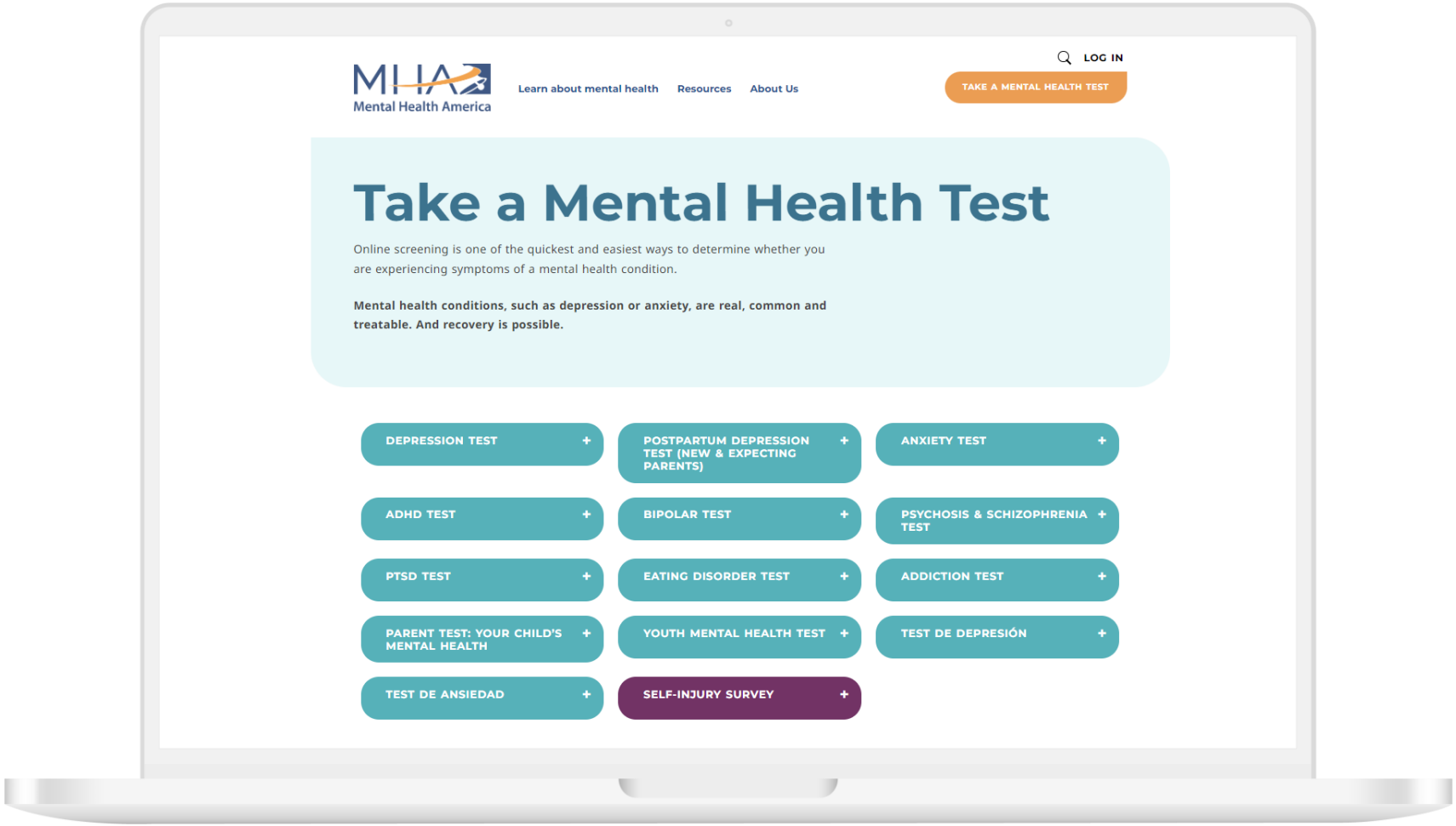
Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Symptoms

- Difficult to control the worry
- Restlessness or feeling keyed up or on edge
- Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank
- Being easily fatigued
- Irritability
- Muscle tension
- Sleep disturbance

Available Resources

mhanational.org



Suicide Awareness

Warning Signs

- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide.
- Threatening to hurt or kill themselves
- Looking for ways to kill themselves, seeking access to means
- Showing anxiety or agitation
- Being unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Feeling no reason for living, no sense of purpose in life
- Feeling trapped, like there is no way out.
- Thinking there is no reason for living.
- Thinking there is no safe way out of a bad situation.

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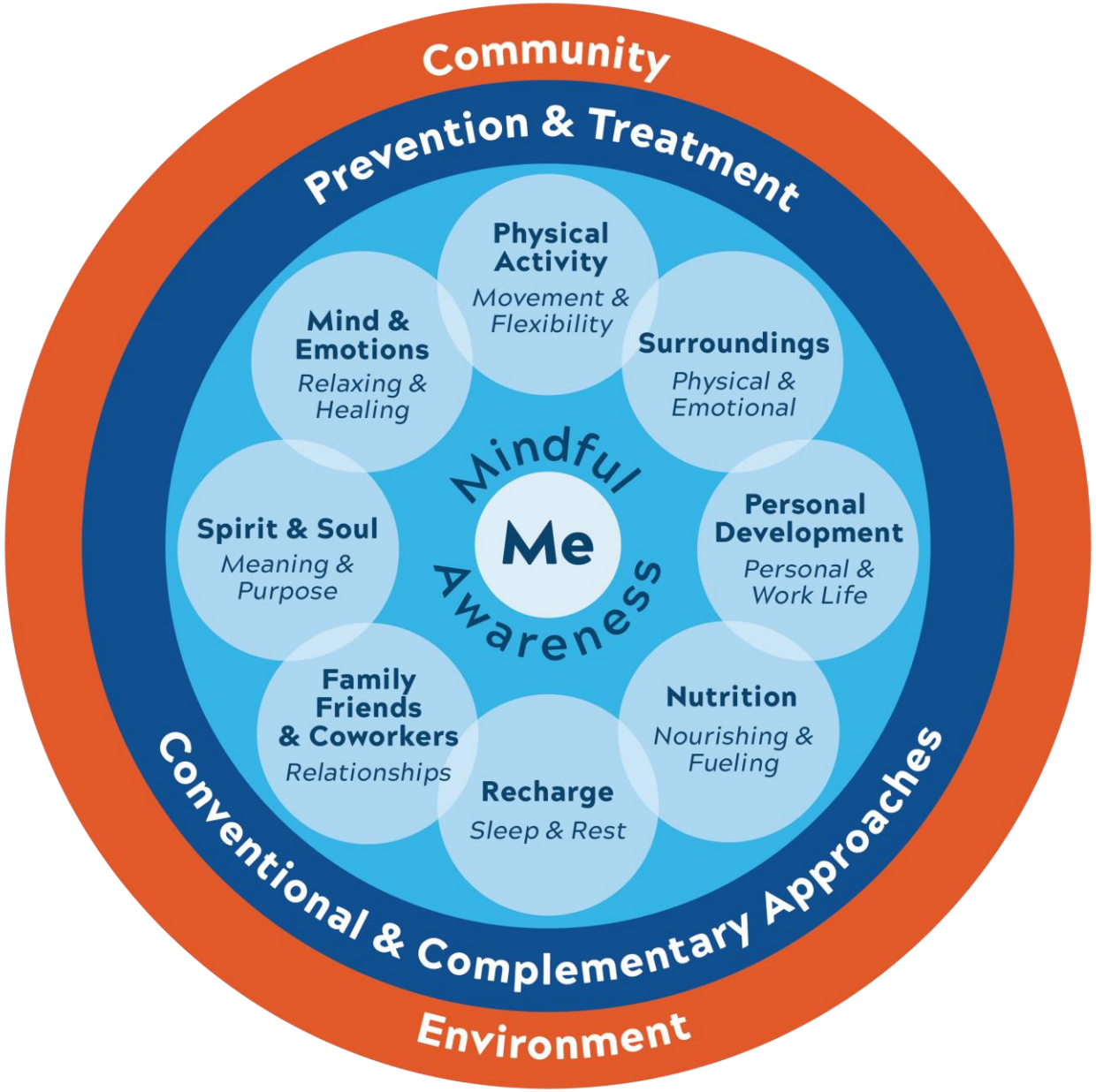
Substance Use Disorder

1. Taking the substance in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to
2. Wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to
3. Spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance
4. Cravings and urges to use the substance
5. Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of substance use
6. Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships
7. Giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use
8. Using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger
9. Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance
10. Needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance)
11. Development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance

There is no health without mental health.

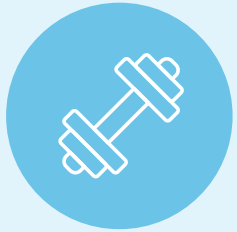
David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D
Former U.S Surgeon General



Rule of the Cow

Mental Health Looks Different for Everyone

Self-Help & Coping Strategies



Exercise

Relaxation & Meditation

Peer Support Groups

Self-Help Books

Social Networks

Hobbies

Nature & Mental Health

Study Published in Molecular Psychiatry

- Study to understand how exposure to urban and natural environments affects mental health and the brain
- Amygdala is more activated during a stress task compared to rural dwellers
- Study to investigate stress-related brain mechanisms
- Amygdala activation decreases after a walk-in nature.
- This can be a preventive or useful tool

Case Study: Brain Changes

Conducted By

Harvard University

Overview

- Participants never meditated before
- **8 weeks** of mediation for **27 mins a day**
- MRI of the brain to see areas impacted

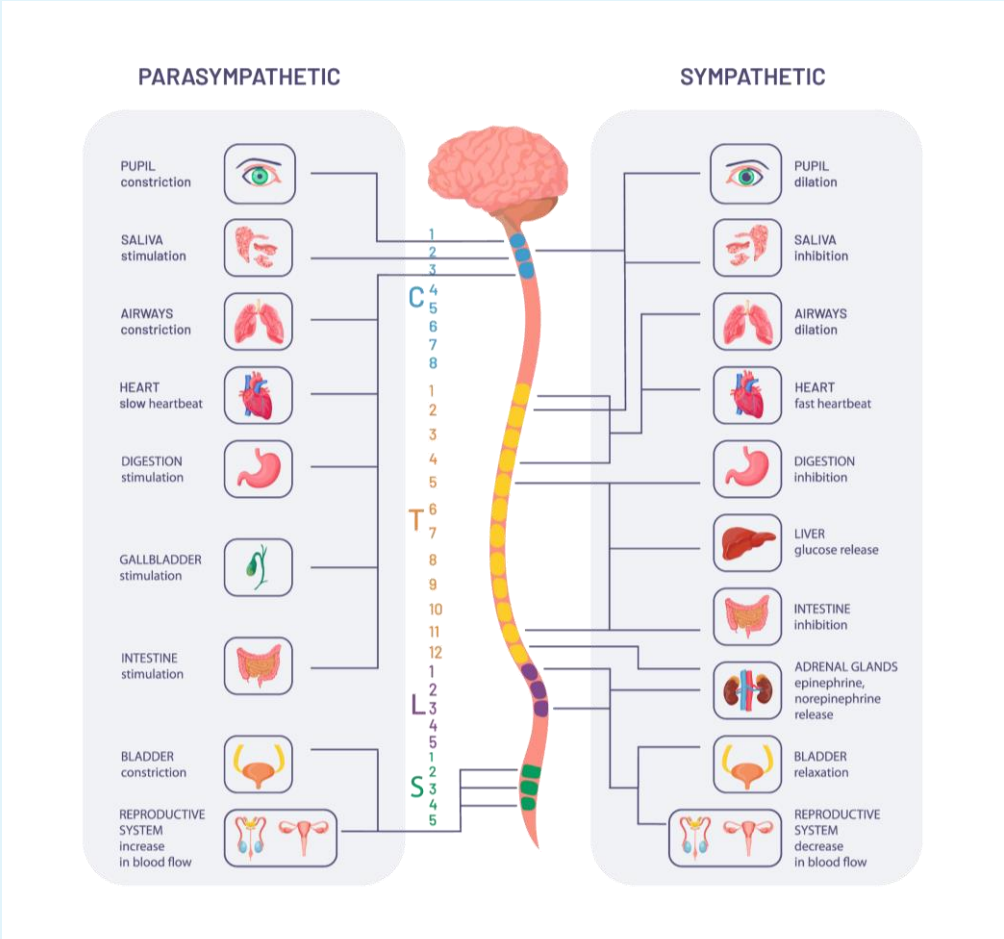
Findings

- An increase in gray matter density in the hippocampus, the part of the brain associated with self-awareness, compassion, and introspection.
- Decreased gray matter density in the amygdala, which is known to play an important role in anxiety and stress.

Paced & Patterned Breathing

Mind Body Therapy

- There is mutual connection between the nervous system and breath.
- Shorter breaths/increased respiratory rate are a result of an activated nervous system which can be from anger, stress or anxiety.
- Slow breaths can decease distress and anxiety.



Schema Explaining How Parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems regulate functioning organs

Mindfulness Apps

Mind Body Therapy

Calm

InsightTimer

headspace

HAPPIER

Professionals Who Can Help

Medical Doctors & Advanced Practitioners

Psychologists

Social Workers

Counselors & Therapists

Crisis Support Specialists

Substance Use Professionals

Certified Peer Specialists

CARES

C **Compassionate Listening**
Be present without judgment.

A **Assess Risk**
Evaluate for harm to self or others.

R **Reassure and Connect**
Provide comfort and link to resources.

E **Empower Self-Care**
Encourage self-help and coping techniques.

S **Support System**
Encourage reaching out to friends or family.

Early Signs & Symptoms

A New Pattern
Consistently arriving late for or canceling personal and work-related obligations.

Fatigued Appearance
Looking visibly tired or drained.

Untidy Clothing
Wearing disheveled or unkempt attire.

Unusual Neglect of Personal Grooming
Not maintaining the usual level of neatness or self-care.

Loss of Interest
Not finding pleasure in work, hobbies, or activities that were once enjoyable.

Feelings of Sadness
Experiencing a deep emotional state characterized by unhappiness or sorrow.

Anxiety & Concern
Feeling uneasy or troubled about something specific.

Struggling with Focus
Having trouble concentrating or maintaining attention at home, school, or work.

Uncertainty in Decision-Making
Experiencing indecisiveness or difficulty making choices.

Worsening Signs & Symptoms

Social Isolation
Consistently arriving late for or canceling personal and work-related obligations.

Workplace Behavior Changes

Absenteeism
Frequently missing work or being absent.

Presenteeism
Being physically present at work but not fully engaged or productive.

Unusual Conduct
Displaying odd or erratic behavior that deviates from the norm.

Neglected Self-Care
A decline in personal hygiene, such as not maintaining cleanliness or grooming routines.

Visible Signs of Injury
Bruises or cuts that appear to be healing at different stages.

Deepening Sadness
Feeling increasingly unhappy or sorrowful.

Overwhelming Hopelessness
Experiencing a sense of despair or lack of optimism.

Start the Conversation

Conversation Starters

“Are you okay?”

“I’ve noticed that…”

“How are you, really?”

“Do you want to take a walk?”

Step-by-Step Guide to Start the Conversation

Scan *or* Click

- Try to find a place and time where the person feels safe and comfortable.
- Resist the urge to think about how you should respond next or offer advice.
- Show respect, compassion and empathy for their feelings with responses like “That sounds hard to manage” or “I’m sorry things are difficult right now.”
- Use the technique of repeating back what you’ve heard to ensure your understanding is clear.

Suicide Risk Assessment

Responding to a Crisis

1. Assess

2. Ask the Question

Are you thinking about killing yourself?

Are you thinking about suicide?

If they answer yes to the question, proceed to Step 3.

3. Ask About Planning

Have you thought about how you would kill yourself?

Have you decided when you would do it?

Have you done anything to get the things you need to kill yourself?

If they answer yes to any of these questions, proceed to Step 4.

4. Get Help Immediately

Call 911. Tell the dispatcher that the person is at risk for suicide. If available, ask for a mental health crisis professional.

Connect the person to appropriate professional help.

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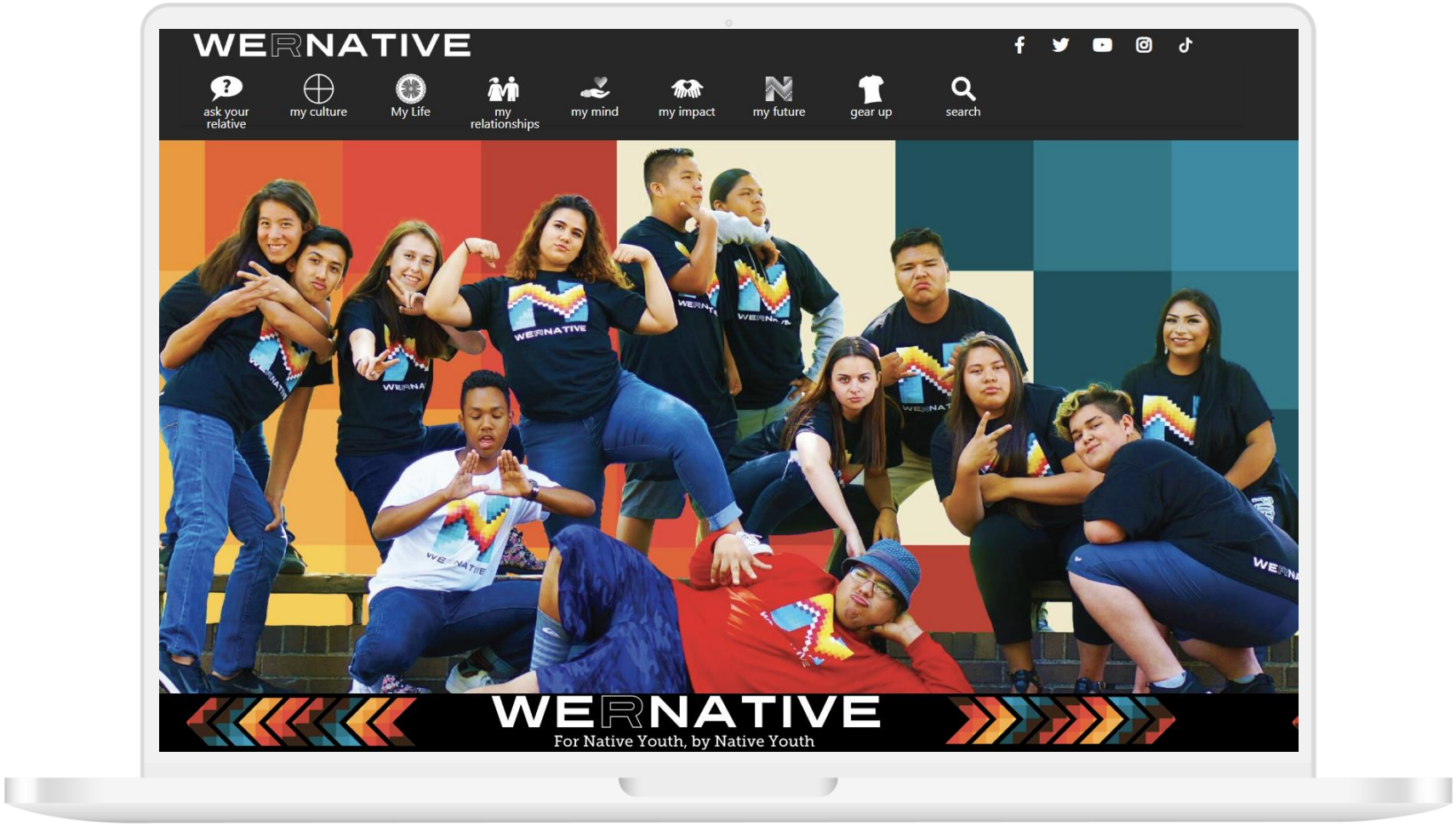
Available Resources

nativeandstrong.org

Call 988 and **press 4** for the Native & Strong Lifeline, available 24/7.

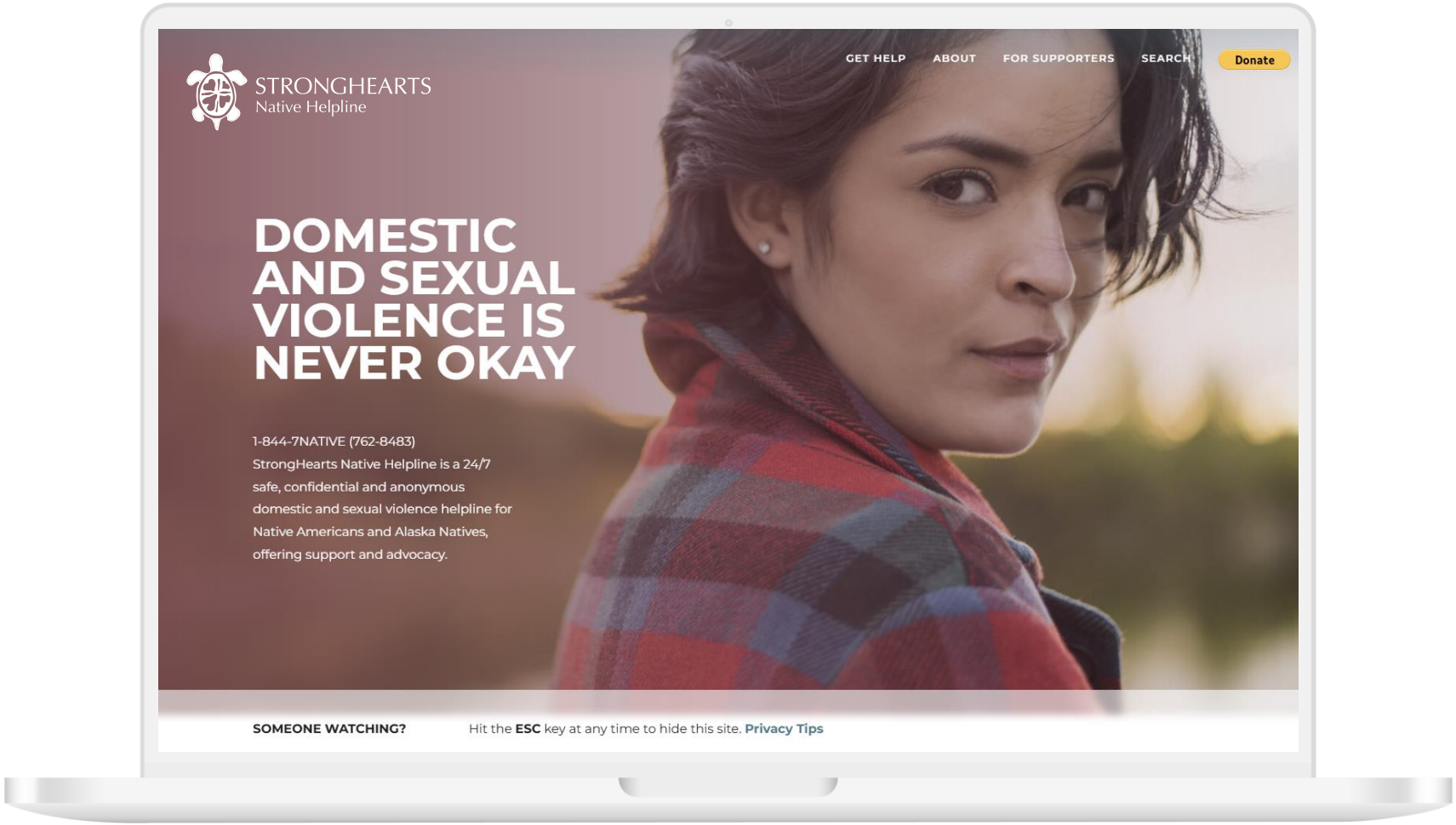
Available Resources

wernative.org



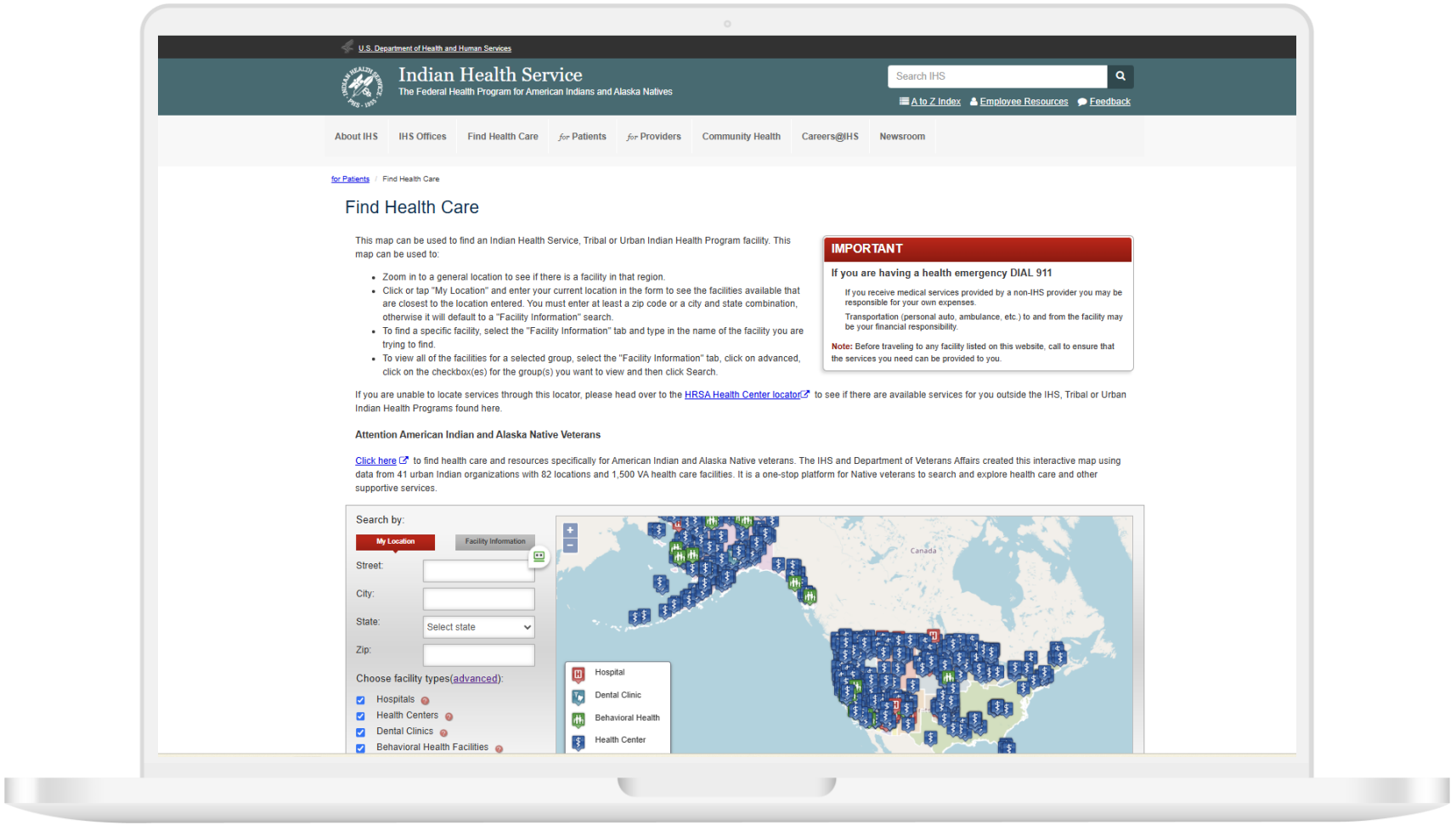
Available Resources

strongheartshelpline.org



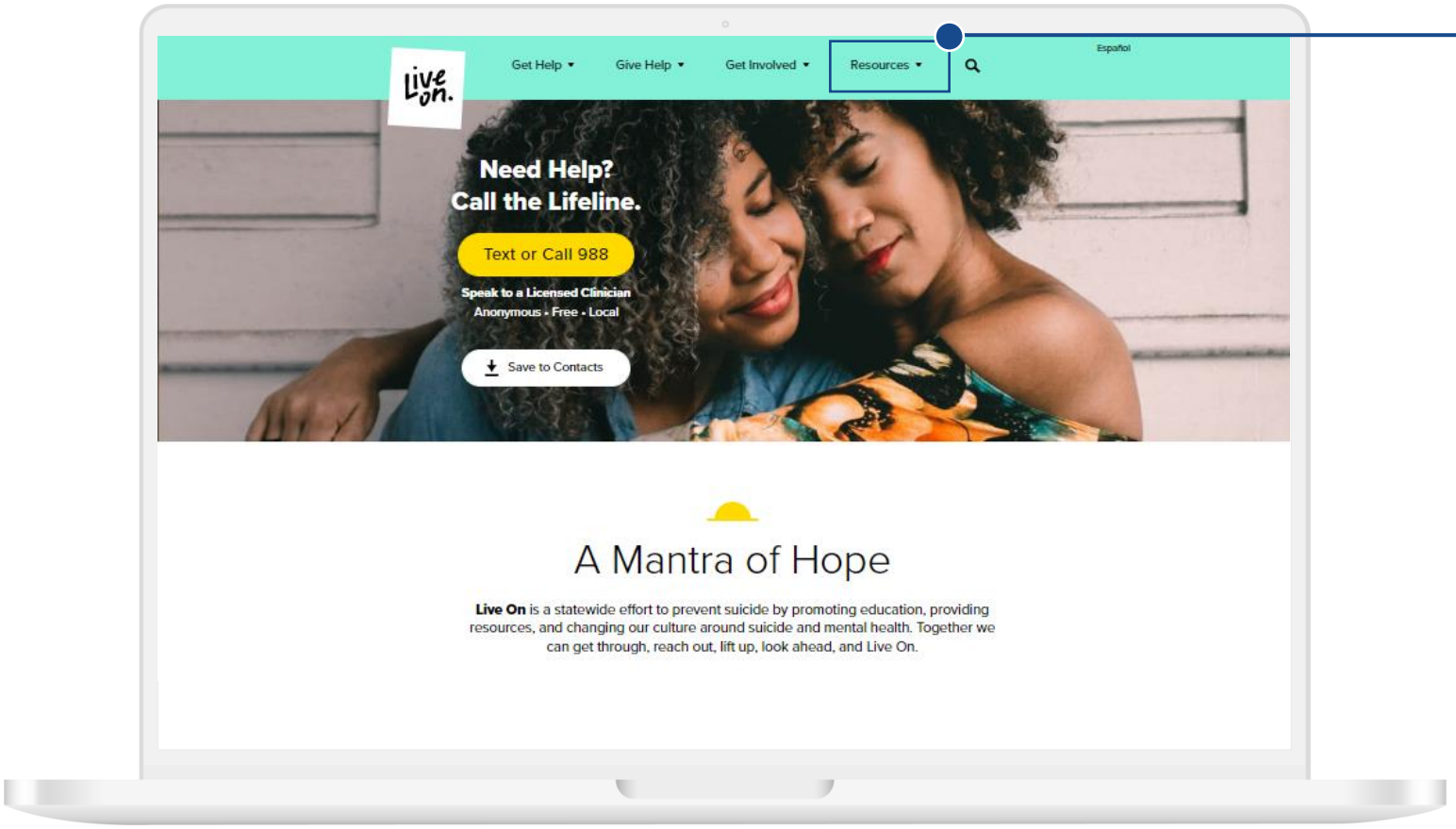
Available Resources

ihs.gov/findhealthcare



Available Resources

liveonutah.org



Resources

- Faith
- LGBTQ+
- Youth
- Workplace
- Crisis and Treatment
- Safe Messaging
- Firearm Safety
- Playbook

More Stories from LiveThroughThis.org

© Live Through It | Photo Credit: Dese'Rae L. Stage

EAP & Behavioral Health Solutions

- Full coverage of mental health counseling visits,
- regardless of provider or network
- $0 co-pay for unlimited mental health therapy sessions
- Telehealth options
- EAP sessions to 6, 10, or 12 counseling sessions
- Crisis childcare or eldercare support

Reasons to Seek Therapy?

Mounting Worry
Feeling more anxious or troubled about specific concerns.

Managing Stress
Long-term or severe stress.

Personal Issues
Discussing topics you don’t feel safe discussing elsewhere.

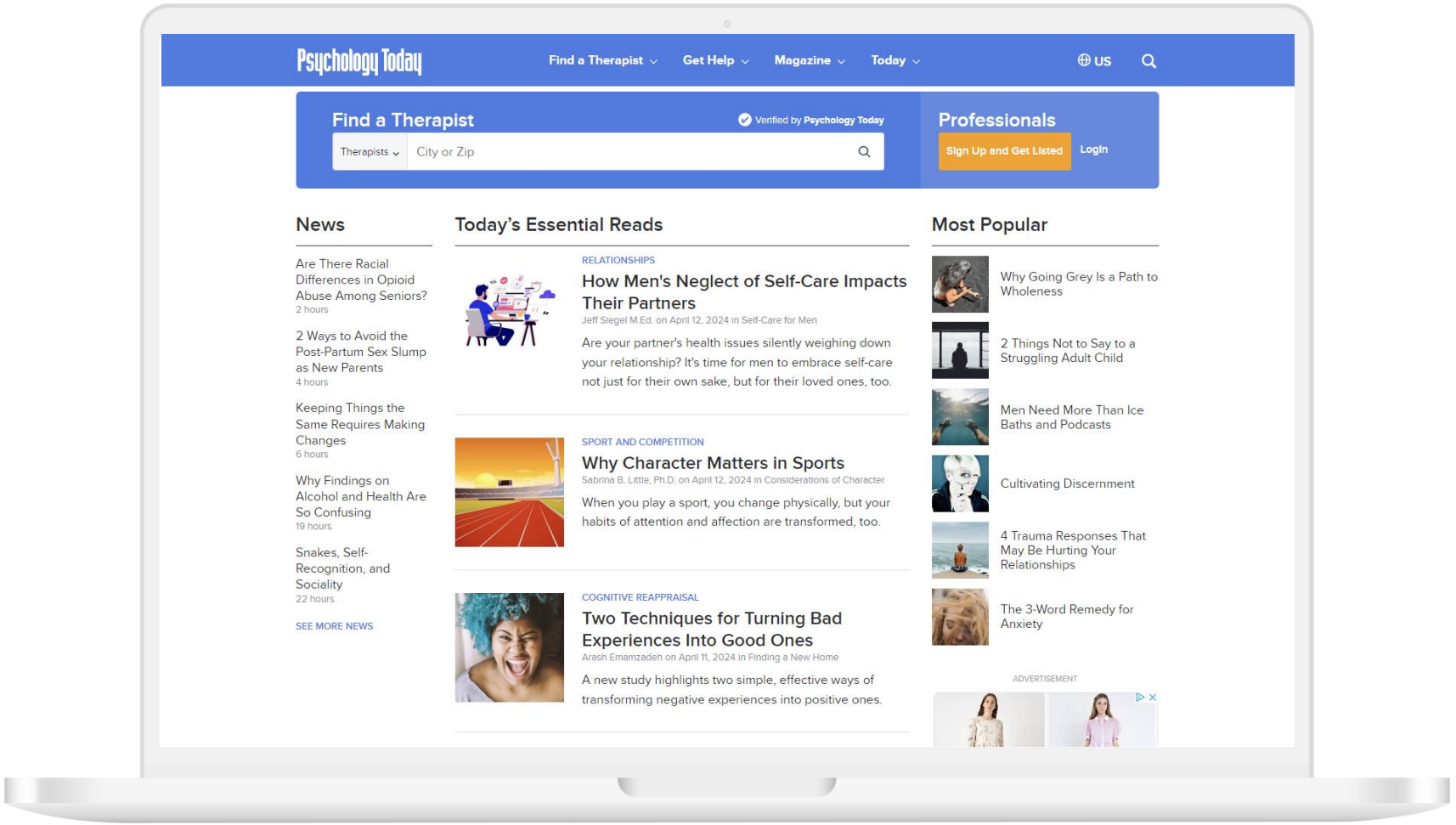
Trauma Processing
Coping with traumatic events.

Life Events
Dealing with major life changes (e.g., loss, relocation, relationship issues).

Mental Health Conditions
Symptoms of depression, anxiety, or other mental health concerns

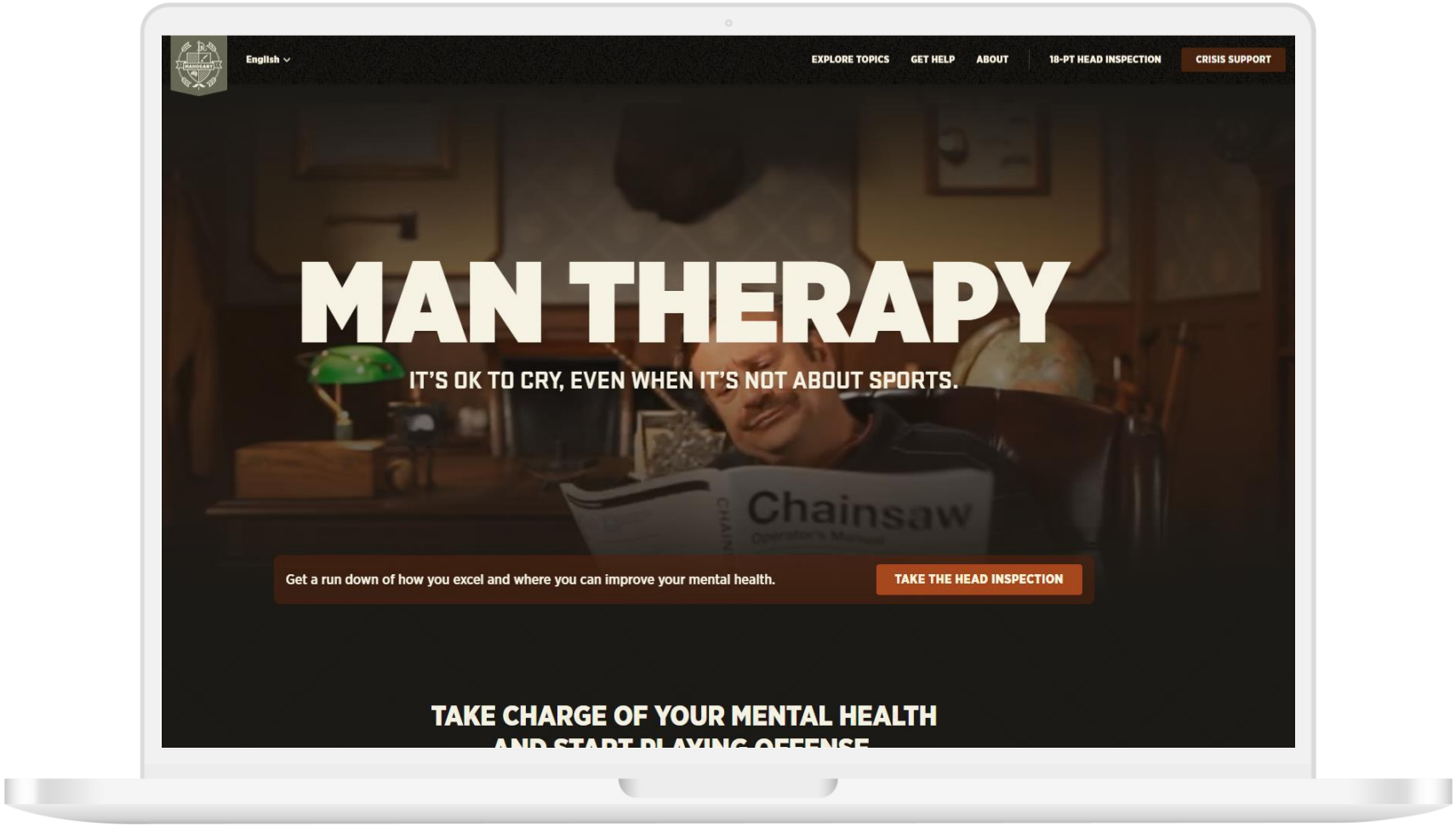
Available Resources

psychologytoday.com



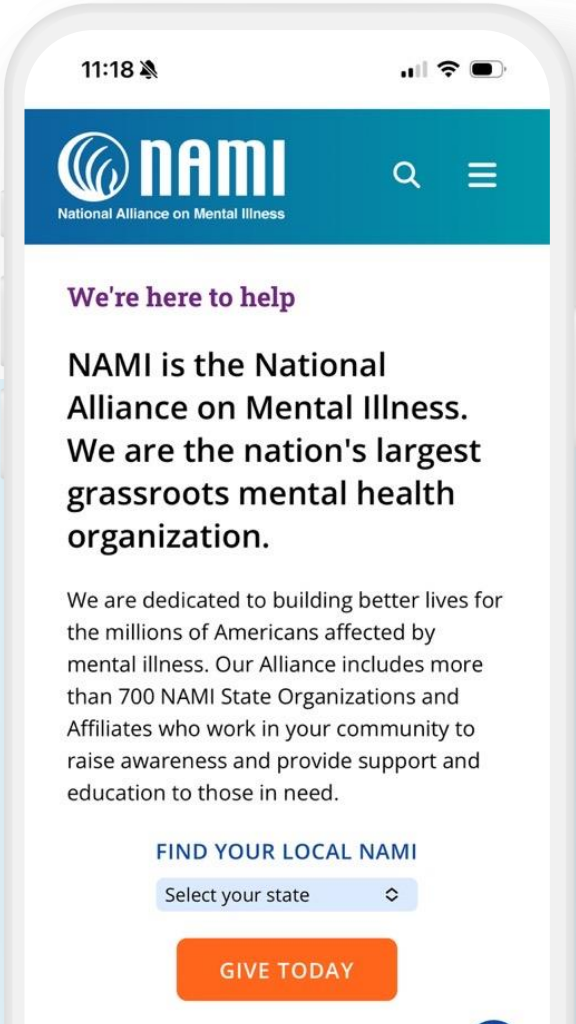
Available Resources

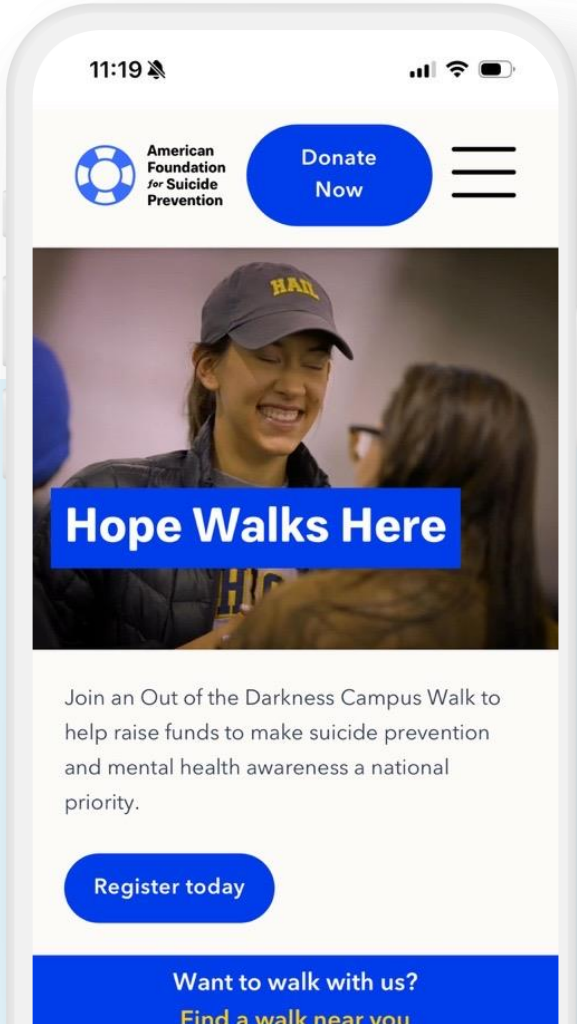
mantherapy.org



NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention





Case Example: Jason

Jason, the department manager, has observed a significant change in Alex, one of his team members. Previously, Alex was punctual, efficient, and friendly. However, lately, Alex has been avoiding social interactions with colleagues, missing work on most Mondays, arriving late on other days, smelling of alcohol, and struggling to focus during meetings. Jason notices Alex's clothes seem to be much bigger as if has lost a significant amount of weight. During a private conversation, Jason learns that Alex is experiencing financial stress and using alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Case Example: Jason

Warning Signs

Late Arrivals & Disheveled Appearance

Alex arrives late to work, disheveled, and sometimes smelling of alcohol.

Impaired Focus & Performance

During meetings, Alex struggles to concentrate, often missing important points or deadlines.

Social Withdrawal

Alex avoids social interactions with colleagues and rarely engages in casual conversations.

Physical Changes

Jason observes that Alex has lost weight, indicating potential neglect of self-care.

Disclosure of Personal Struggles

Alex confides in Jason about financial stress and increased reliance on alcohol.

Drug Use & Health

2022 National Survey Results

47.8 Million People

or

17.3% of the Population

Aged 12 and older

had a substance use disorder in the past year

1 in 11 People

With SUD access treatment

More than

70% of Individuals

With SUD continue to maintain employment

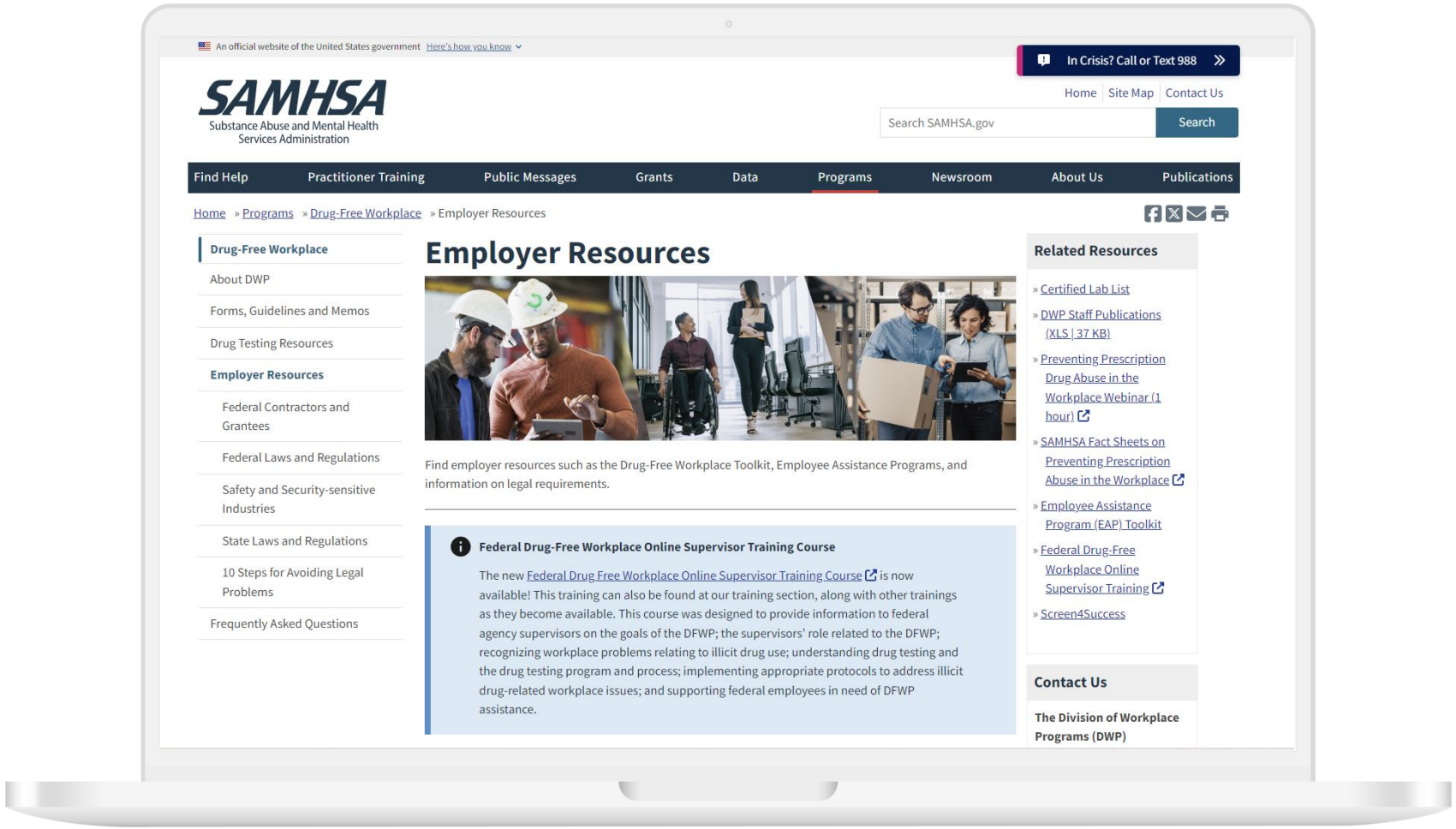
About

10% of Your Team

Will have SUD

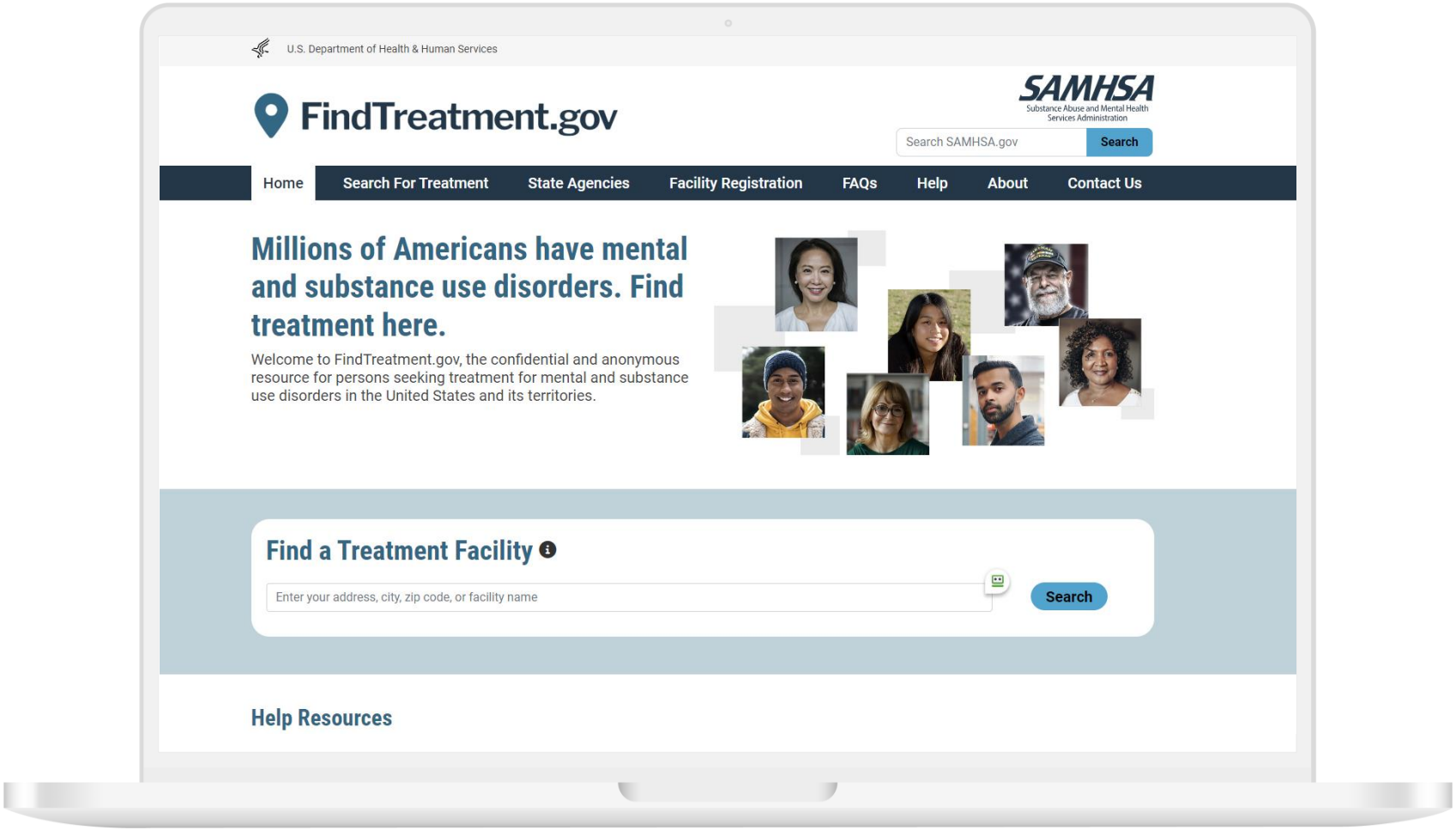
Available Resources

samhsa.gov



Available Resources

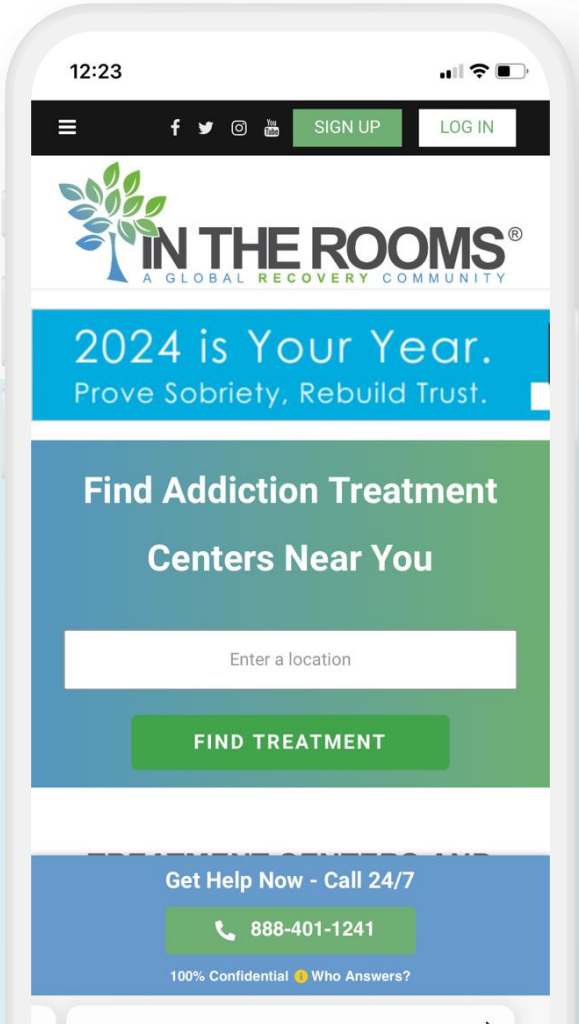
findtreatment.gov

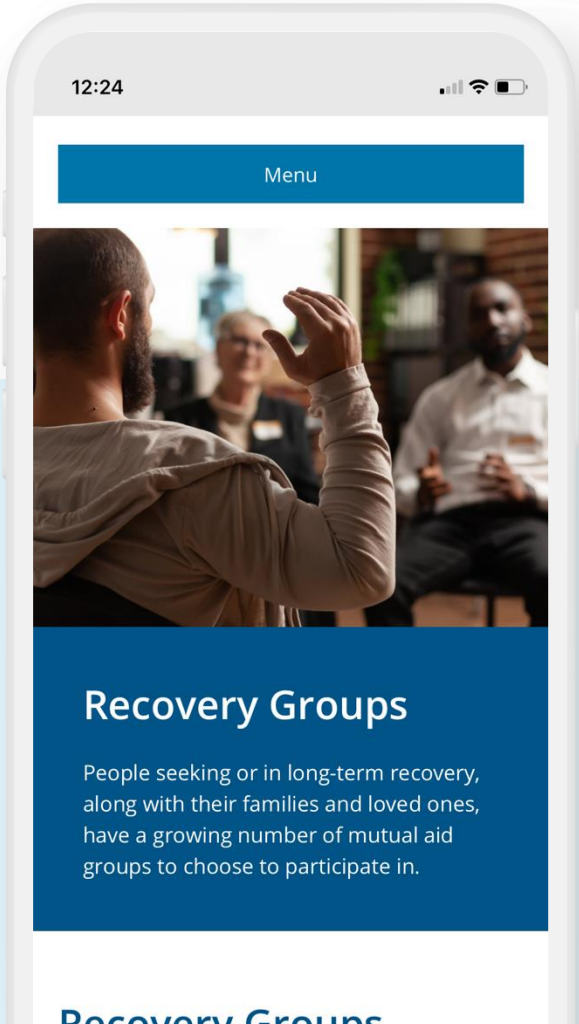


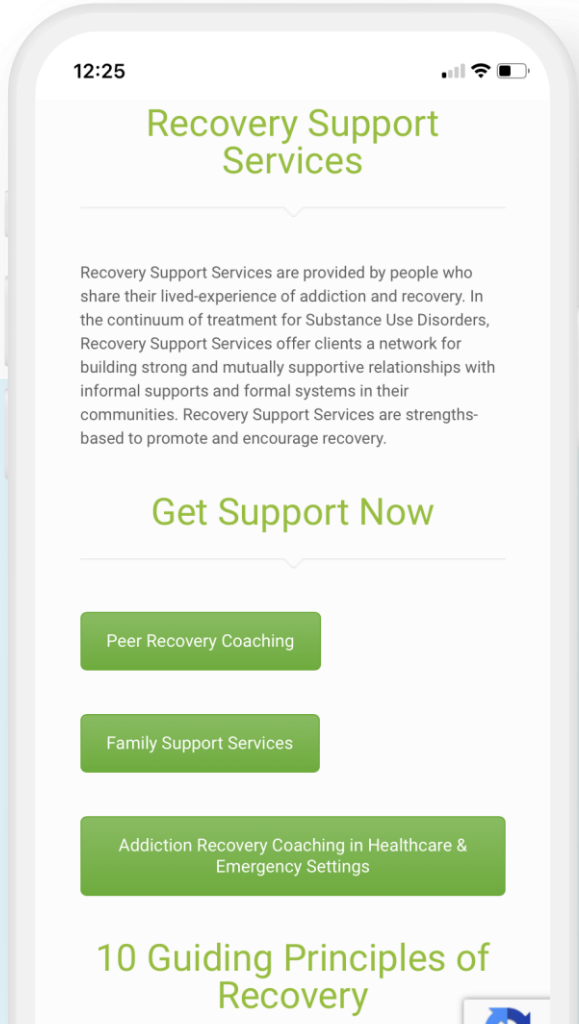
IN THE ROOMS®
A GLOBAL RECOVERY COMMUNITY

FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY

USARA
Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness

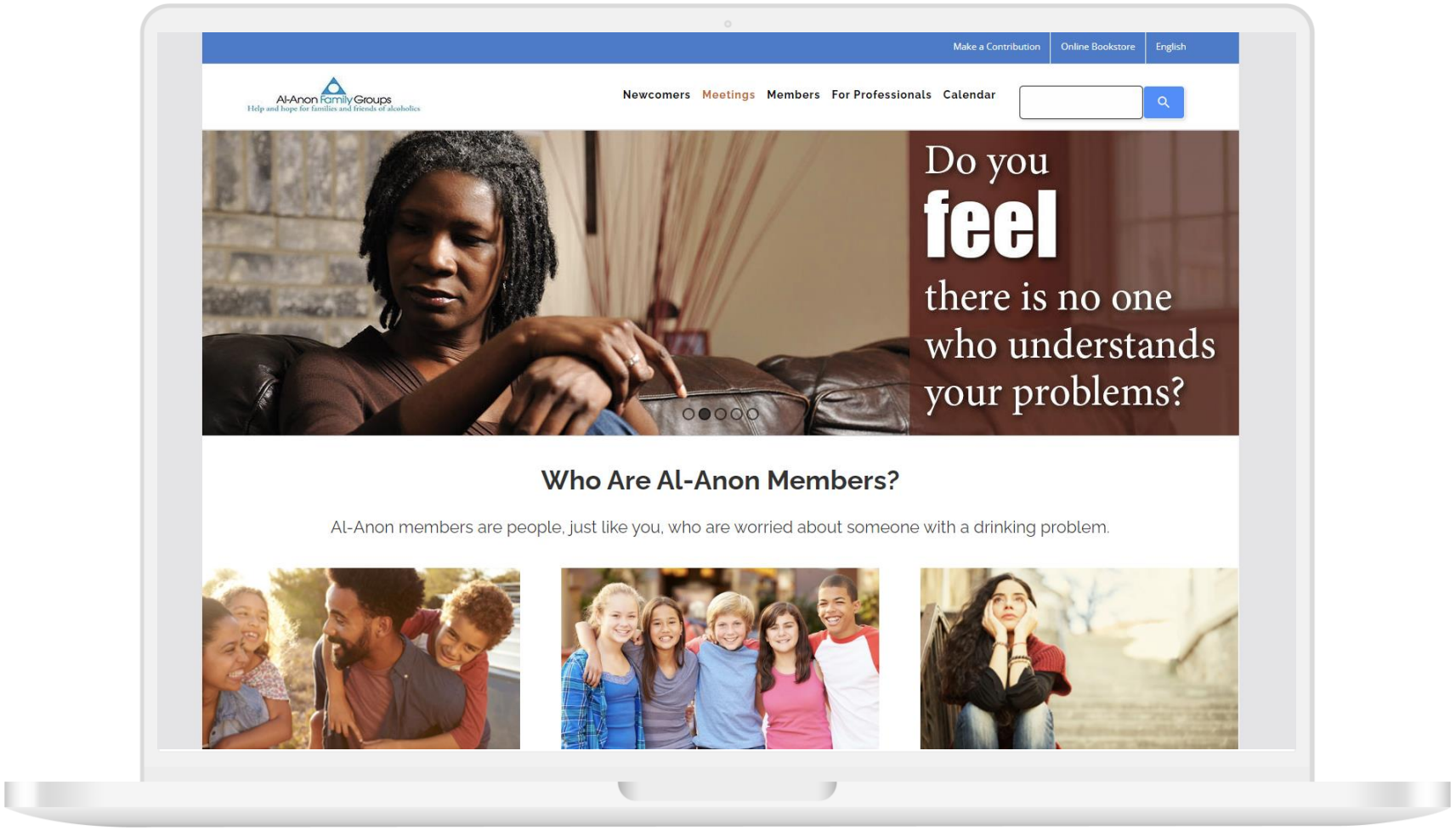




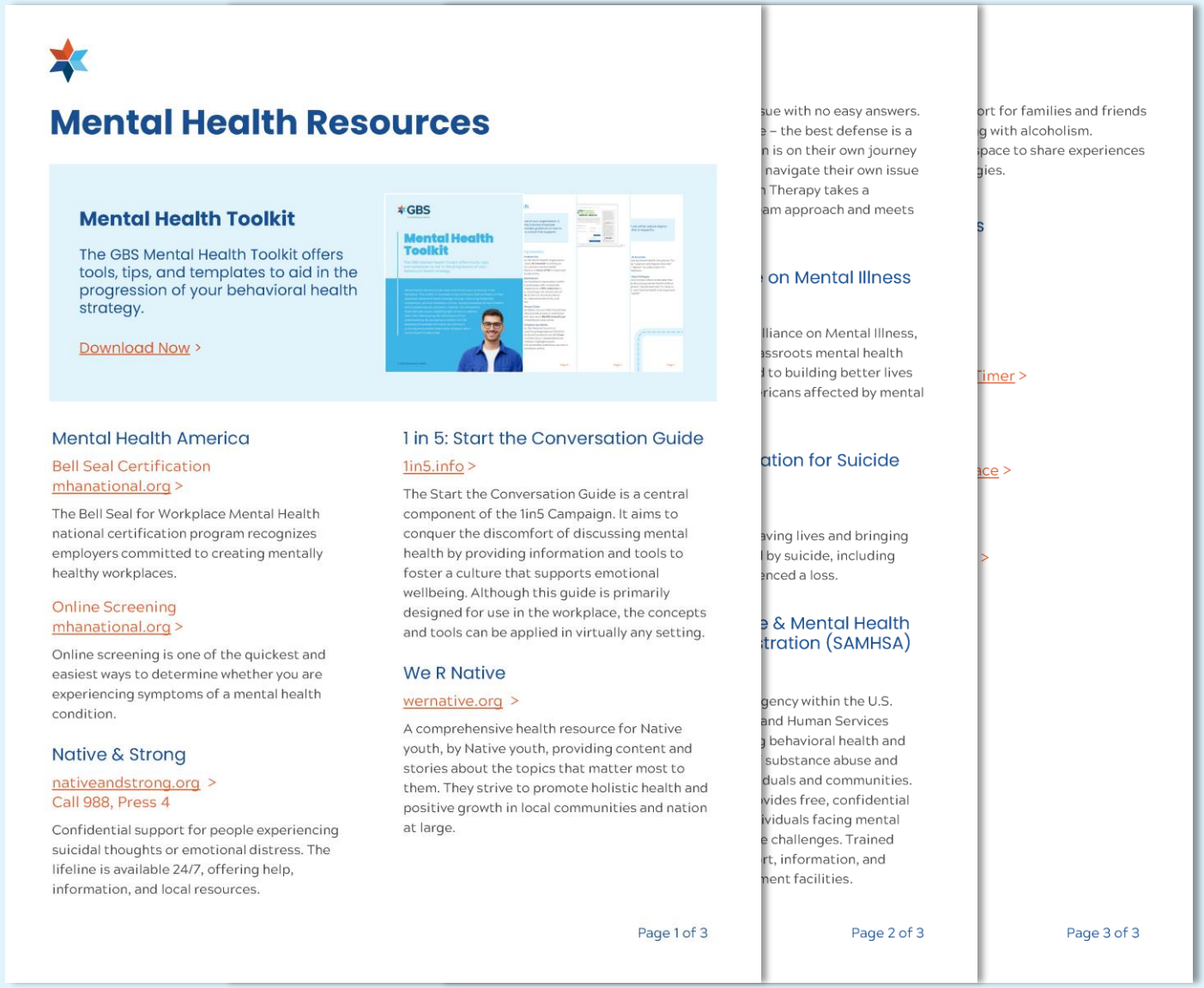


Available Resources

al-anon.org



Mental Health Resources



Mental Health Resources

Mental Health Toolkit

The GBS Mental Health Toolkit offers tools, tips, and templates to aid in the progression of your behavioral health strategy.

Download Now >

Mental Health America

Bell Seal Certification
mhanational.org >

The Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health national certification program recognizes employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces.

Online Screening
mhanational.org >

Online screening is one of the quickest and easiest ways to determine whether you are experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition.

Native & Strong

nativeandstrong.org >
Call 988, Press 4

Confidential support for people experiencing suicidal thoughts or emotional distress. The lifeline is available 24/7, offering help, information, and local resources.

1 in 5: Start the Conversation Guide

1in5.info >

The Start the Conversation Guide is a central component of the 1in5 Campaign. It aims to conquer the discomfort of discussing mental health by providing information and tools to foster a culture that supports emotional wellbeing. Although this guide is primarily designed for use in the workplace, the concepts and tools can be applied in virtually any setting.

We R Native

wernative.org >

A comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, providing content and stories about the topics that matter most to them. They strive to promote holistic health and positive growth in local communities and nation at large.

GBS
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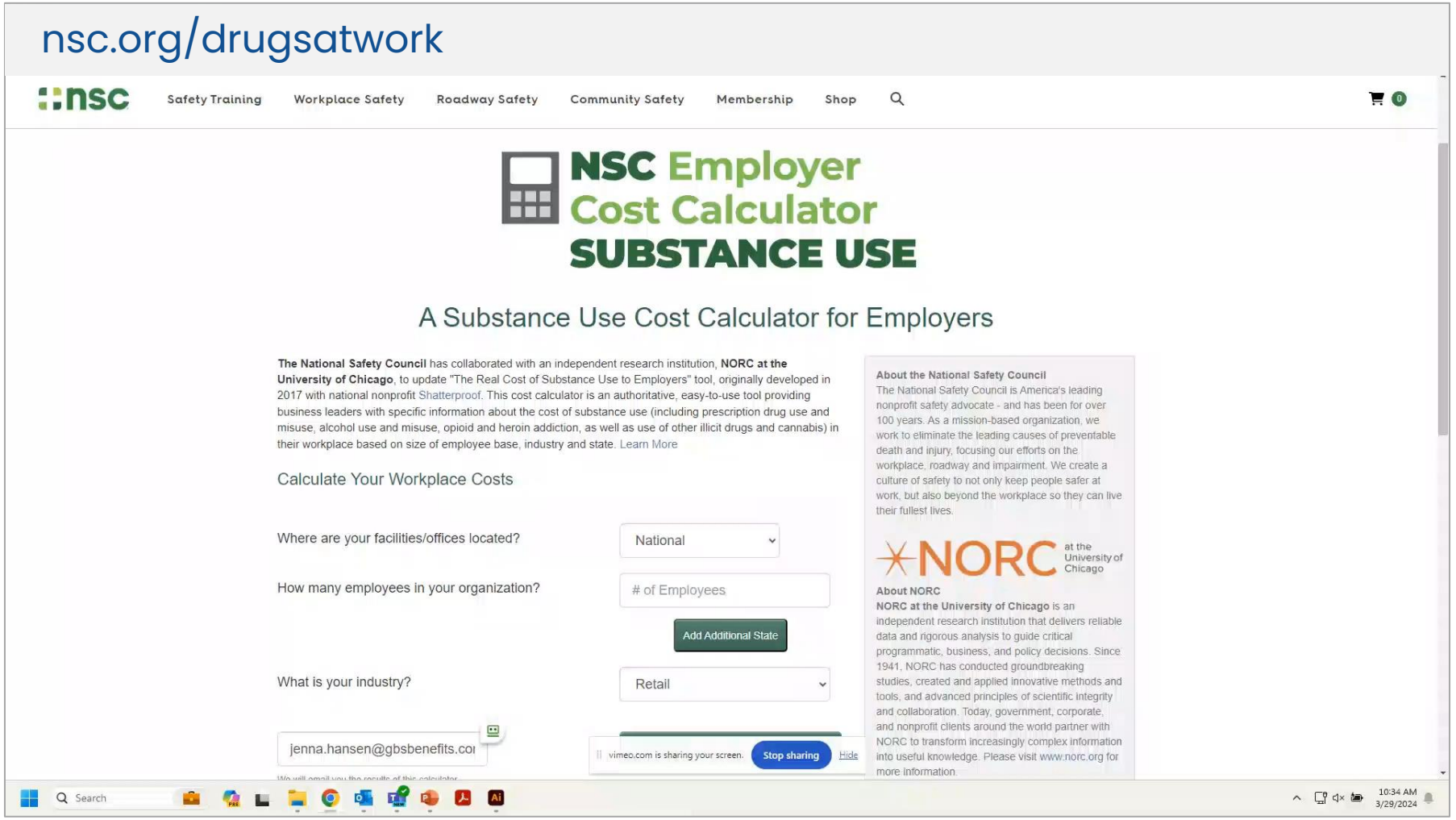
GBS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Thank you for joining me today!

PRESENTED BY
Catherine Van Tassell, PA-C, DipACLM, LCSW, CPT
GBS Director, Behavioral Health Consulting

What are your costs?

National Safety Council | Substance Use Employer Cost Calculator